

Message Text

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65-60

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-20 CIAE-00 DODE-00 HEW-06 INR-07

NSAE-00 PA-02 PRS-01 SCA-01 SCSE-00 USIA-15 EB-07

IO-10 /080 W

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FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8984

UNCLAS NEW DELHI 7232

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EGEN SWEL IN

SUBJECT: LATHYRISM CASES REPORTED IN DROUGHT AFFECTED

MADHYA PRADESH

FOLLOWING SENT ACTION NEW DELHI INFO MADRAS CALCUTTA FROM

BOMBAY MAY 30 IS REPEATED

QUOTE

BOMBAY 1302

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EGEN SWEL IN

SUBJECT: LATHYRISM CASES REPORTED IN DROUGHT AFFECTED

MADHYA PRADESH

1. UNI WIRE SERVICE REPORTED MAY 27 FROM BHOPAL RECURRENCE OF LATHYRUS SATICUS OR LATHYRISM (ATROPHYING LOWER LIMBS IN MALES, LEADING TO PARALYSIS, CAUSED IN INDIA BY EXCESSIVE CONSUMPTION OF A LOCAL LENTIL TYPE CEREAL "KESARI DAL") IN EPIDEMIC FORM IN DROUGHT AFFECTED CHHATTISGARH AND VINDHYA PRADESH REGIONS OF MADHYA PRADESH.

2. MOST VICTIMS ALLEGEDLY LANDLESS LABORERS WORKING ON

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GOVERNMENT WORK. THEY ARE SUPPLIED WITH "KESARI DAL" IN

LIEU OF DAILY WAGES. DESPITE WARNINGS THAT THE DAL SHOULD

BE DE-TOXICATED BEFORE USED BY WASHING IT WITH COLD AND BOILING WATER AND DRYING IT, POOR AND IGNORANT FARMERS TEND TO IGNORE THE CAUTION. ACCORDING TO DR. M.P. DWIVEDI, CHIEF OF THE INDIAN COUNCIL OF MEDICAL RESEARCH (ICMR) TEAM DOING RESEARCH ON LATHYRISM, FRESH CASES HAVE STARTED "POURING" INTO HOSPITALS AT SATNA, REWA AND RAIPUR.

3. MADHYA PRADESH PRODUCES HALF OF COUNTRY'S PRODUCTION OF ONE MILLION METRIC TONS OF KESARI DAL. THOUGH GOI BANNED ITS SALE A FEW YEARS AGO UNDER PREVENTION OF FOOD ADULTERATION ACT, DAL IS FREELY SOLD IN MADHYA PRADESH EXCEPT IN INDORE. MORE THAN 100,000 ABLE-BODIED PERSONS IN 15-45 AGE GROUP ARE REPORTEDLY AFFECTED SINCE THE DISEASE WAS DETECTED A FEW YEARS AGO.

4. REVIVAL OF THIS INCURABLE DISEASE IN EPIDEMIC FORM IS ATTRIBUTED MAINLY TO INCREASED CONSUMPTION OF DAL. ICMR HAS SUGGESTED STATE MONOPOLY PROCUREMENT AND DISTRIBUTION AFTER DE-TOXIFICATION. NO INFORMATION ON PREVENTIVE STEPS BY THE STATE GOVERNMENT IS AVAILABLE. SIGNED BANE

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